

AN
ARGUMENT
FOR
UNION,
Taken from the true Interest of those
DISSENTERS
IN
ENGLAND.

Who Profess, and Call themselves,
PROTESTANTS.

L O N D O N,

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To the Reader.

*A*mong all the Excellent Discourses that have been published by the London Divines, to recover the Dissenters to the Church of England, there was none better received in the World, than An Argument for Union taken from the true Interest of those Dissenters in England who Profess, and call themselves Protestants. It was Writ with that Plainness and Sincerity, and, withal, in so convincing a manner, that it is thought it may be of service both to the Church, and to the Dissenters, to have it Re-printed, at this time, when it is scarce to be had any where, except in the Collection of Cases. The High Station in the Church to which the Reverend Author is since Advanced, his unaffected Simplicity, as well as his just Character for Moderation, may give this Discourse greater Weight with some Readers, who will here find the Sense he had then of our Divisions, where he lays the Blame, and his Opinion of an Occasional Conformist.

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ARGUMENT FOR UNION, &c.

I Take it for granted, (seeing a Truth so very plain needs no formal Proof) that the ready way to overthrow a Church, is, first to divide it. It is also too manifest, that our Dissentions are Divisions, properly so called, or Publick Ruptures. It is true, notwithstanding these Ruptures, the Church still lives, and, in some good Measure, prospers: But now Mortal these Breaches may at last prove, thro' their continuance and increase, a Man who has but a competency of Judgment, may easily foretel. It is therefore the business of every good Man, as far as in him lies, to Dissuade, with prudent Zeal, from these Divisions, which are in their nature so uncharitable, and so perillous in their Consequence.

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Now

An Argument for Union, &c.

Now one way of moving Men to desist from their Undertakings, is, the shewing of them, with calmness of Temper, and plainness of Reasoning, that their *Ends* are not likely to be obtain'd: As also, that by the *Means* they use, they will bring upon themselves those very Evils which they fear, and of the removal of which they have expectation.

Wherefore, I have chosen an *Argument* of this Nature, in order to the persuading of *Dissenters* to join in the Exercise of *Constant Communion* with the Church of England. And I have here endeavoured to make it evident to them; that, in attempting to pull down this *Establish'd Church*, they unwarily turn their own force against themselves, and prepare Materials for the Tombs of their own Parties.

*The Argument
it self. Its
Partition and
Method.*

This *Argument* is here offered to them in the Spirit of Christian Charity, and without any design of exposing or exasperating any Person who differs in his Notions from the sense of the Writer. For he had rather lie at the feet of the meanest Man, who is overtaken with an Error, than spurn insolently against him.

Now, in the management of this *Argument*, it is necessary to shew two things.

First, *What those ends are which are proposed by the Dissenters?* I mean those which seem, with any tolerable colour of Reason, fit to be proposed; and which are designed by the better and wiser of that number.

Secondly, *What Reasons may make it manifest, that the ends which they propose, can never be procured by the Dissentment of the Church of England.*

These things being shewed, there shall follow such a *Conclusion* as is suitable to the Premises.

*The Ends of the
Dissenters.*

First, For the *Ends* proposed by the more prudent *Dissenters*, they are of two kinds.

The first end is *Subordinate*.

The second is *Principal*: Or, the End to which the former serveth in the quality of the *Means*.

The *Subordinate End* is the *Establishing of themselves*. And it hath two Branches.

Either the settling themselves (*First*) as a *National Church*.

Or, (*Secondly*) as several distinct Churches, giving undisturbed Toleration to one another.

For I am not willing to believe all of them to be given up to such a degree of Insatiation, as to be intnet only upon beating down, without considering what is fit

fit to be set up. That is the way of Tempest, and not of Builders.

The *Principal* is, the further Advancement of a Reformed Religion. This also hath two parts.

1. *The Removal of Popery.*

2. *The Introduction of the Protestant Religion in greater Purity and Perfection, than the Church of England is (in their Opinion) as yet, arrived at, or can probably attain to by virtue of its present Constitution.*

If there be amongst them Men disturbed in their Understandings, by the heat of *Enthusiasm*; if there be amongst them any Men whose Wisdom is sensual and worldly; who presumptuously make Heaven stoop to Earth, and conceal their private and secular Designs under the venerable name of *Pure Religion*; I do not concern my self with them in this *Persuasive to Union*. The former cannot, and the latter will not be convinc'd. For there is no Ear so deaf as that which Interest hath stopp'd. And there is a great deal of earnest Truth suggested in the Jocular Speech of James the Fifth of Scotland; who, when his Treasurer desired the liberty to be plain with him, * *Memoirs. p. 2.* drew out his Sword, and said merrily to him, *I shall slay thee, if thou speak against my profit.*

The first Branch of the first or Subordinate End of the Dissenter is, the establishing of themselves as a National Church.

The first Branch of the first End of the Dissenters: viz. Union in a National Church.

This is either designed by *All of them*, or by a Party which believeth it self to be most sober, and most numerous, and most likely to prevail over the rest; so far at least as to become the State Party.

For *All of them* to expect to be united in one uniform Body, is to hope, not only against the Grounds of Hope, but of Possibility.

For the Parties are very many, and very differing (or rather very contrary) and they cannot frame amongst them any common Scheme in which their Assents can be united.

What Communion (for Example sake) can the Presbyterians have with Arians, Socinians, Anabaptists, Fifth Monarchy Men, Sensual Millenaries, Behmenists, Familists, Seekers, Antinomians, Ranters, Sabbatarians, Quakers, Muggletonians, Sweet-singers? These may associate in a Caravan, but cannot join in the Communion of a Church. Such a Church would be like the *Family of Error*, and her Daughters, described in Mr.

Spen.

An Argument for Union, &c.

Spencer's Fairy Queen, of which none were alike, unless in this, that they were all deform'd: And how shall the *Christians of this present Church* be disposed of to their just Satisfaction? They will never Incorporate with such a medly of Religions, and they are such, both for their quality, and their number, as not to be beneath a very serious Consideration.

For the *Prevalent Party*, there seemeth to be both *Reason and Experience* against their hopes of establishing themselves as a *National Church*.

These Reasons, amongst others, have moved me to entertain this Persuasion concerning them.

First, Such a Party not maintaining *Episcopal Government*, which hath obtained here from the Times of the *Britains*, (who in the Apostolical Age, received the *Christian Religion*) and which is so agreeable to the Scheme of the Monarchy; it is not probable that they shall easily procure an exchange of it for a newer model, by the general consent of Church or State. I may add, the Body of the People of *England*, whose *Genius* renders them tenacious of their ancient Customs.

Again, All the Parties amongst us have of late declared for mutual Forbearance. They cannot therefore be consistent with themselves, if they frame such a *National Constitution*, by which any Man, who Dissents from it, shall be otherwise dealt with, than by personal Conference; which also he must have liberty not to admit, if he be persuaded it is not fit or safe for him. And such a Body without any other Nerves for its strength and motion; for the Encouragement of those who are Members of it, and the Discouragement of those who refuse its Communion, will not long hold together: Nor hath it means in it, sufficient for the Ends to which it is designed. And indeed by this means, the Spiritual Power of Excommunication will be rendred of none Effect. For, what Punishment, what Shame, what Check, will it be to Cross and Perverse Men, if being shut out of the *National Church*, they may with open Arms, and with Applause due to real Converts, be received into this, or the other particular Congregation, as it best suiteth with their good liking?

Furthermore, it is commonly said, that since the *Presbyterians* have gathered Churches out of Churches, there are not many true and proper *Disciplinarians* in *England*.

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An Argument for Union, &c.

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If it be so, then *Independency*, is amongst Dissenters the prevalent side; and know not how a *National Church* can be made up of Separate Independent Churches; for each Congregation is a Church by itself, and hath, besides the general Covenant of Baptism, a particular Church Covenant; and therefore, it is difficult to imagine how all of 'em can be, by any Coherence of the Parts, united into one intire Society.

But be it suppos'd that the *Disciplinarians* are of all Parties the most numerous and prevalent; yet *Experience* sheweth how hard a Work it is for all of them to form themselves into a Church of *England*. In the late times of Publick disquiet, they had great Power; they had in human appearance, fair and promising Opportunities; and yet there grew up at their Roots another Party, which, in conclusion, over-dropped them, and brought their Interest into a sensible decay: it being the nature of every Faction, upon Victory obtain'd over their Common Adversary, to subdivide.

In the Year 1640, * *The Commons had a Debate about* July 17. *a new form of Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction: And they agreed* 1640. *White-* that every Shire should be a several Diocess. That there should be constituted, in each Shire, a Presbytery of Twelve Divines, with a President as a Bishop over them. That this President, with the Assistance of some of the Presbyters, should Ordain, Suspend, Deprive, Degrade, Excommunicate. That there should be a Diocesan Synod once a Year; and each third Year a National Synod. A. 1644. 11. while after * it was voted by them, that to have a Presbytery in the Church, was according to the Word of God. *ibid p. 111.*

Many other steps were made in favour of the Discipline. The *Common Prayer-Book* was remov'd; an Assembly of Divines was Establish'd: Their Directory was introduced; they were united in the Bond of a solemn League and Covenant. There was sent up * from the County of *Lancaster*, a Petition sign'd with 12000 Hands for the settling of Classes in those Parts. A Petition of the like importance was fram'd by divers of the Common Council of *London*. They seem'd nigh the gaining of their Point; yet they widely miss'd of it. There was in the Assembly itself, a ferment of Dissention. Mr. *Sympson*, and some others favour'd an *Independent*; Mr. *Selden*, and some of his admirers, an *Erastian* Interest. There was a Party in the Nation who were then called *Dissenting Brethren*; and to these the Directory was as Offensive,

* In Sept. 1646. *Diurnal. p. 131.* *Whitlocks Memoirs p. 137.*

^aId. ib. p. 116.
A. 44.

Ib. A. 45. p.
189.

^aHarm. Con-
fent. p. 20.

[†]Mr. S. Symp-
in Ser. of
Reform. A.
1643. p. 29.

^aD. Joh. Art.
in Ser. call'd,
The Great
Wonder, &c.
before the
Commons, A.
1646. p. 36.

[†]Testim. to
Truth of Je-
sus Christ sub-
scribed Dec.
14. 1647. p. 31.

Offensive, as the Canons and Liturgy had been to those of the *Discipline*. They drew up Reasons against the *Directory of Church Government* by Presbyters.

They afterwards Printed an open Remonstrance against *Presbytery*, of which the Assembly complain'd to the House of a Scandalous Libel. And there were those who Reproached the Presbyterians in the same Phrases, in which they had given vent to their displeasure against the Liturgy of the Church of *England*. The Ministers of *Lancashire* * complain'd concerning them, *That they had compared the Covenant to the Alcoran of the Turks, and Mass of the Papists, and Service-Book of the Prelates. As likewise, that they said, it was a Brazen Serpent fit to be broken in pieces and ground to Powder, rather than that Men should fall down and worship it.*

Amongst the *Disciplinarians*, some were confident of success. One of them † (for he was not then gone over to the Part of the *Independents*) expressed his Assurance in these most unbecoming Words, before the Commons. *It will (said he) bring such a Blot on God as He shall never wipe out, if your poor Prayers should be turn'd into your own Bosoms; that Prayer for Reformation. A Speech not fit to have been repeated, if it were not necessary to learn Sobriety and Wisdom from the Remembrances of Extravagance in former Times.*

Others acknowledged their hopes, but did not dissemble their fears. *Six Years ago (said a Person eminent * amongst them) after this Parliament had sat a while, it was generally believ'd that [the Woman, the Church] was fallen into her Travel—— but she continues still in pain. Inasmuch as they begin to think she hath not gone her full time, and earnestly desire she may; because they fear nothing more than an abortive Reformation.*

Others did openly confess that their hopes were not answer'd, and that the State of Religion was much declined. The Ministers of the Province of London † used upon this occasion these passionate Words. *Instead of a Reformation, we may say with Sighs, what our Enemies said of us heretofore with scorn, we have a Deformation in Religion.*

Those *Independents* who adher'd to that part of the House which joyned with the Army, prevailed for a Season, but they also were disturbed by those who went under the name of *Lilburnists, Levellers, Agi-*

tators

tators: * Then likewise, Gerard Wynstanly † published * See Hist. of the Principles of Quakerism, discoursing (or rather, *Indep. 2 part. p. 168.* † In repeating the Dreams of his Imagination) in such Ex-
pressions as these. *If you look for the Resurrection of Myst. of God. lin, &c. Anno 1649. Wynst. in Saints Pa- radise, C. 5. p. 54 &c.*
Jesus Christ——— Every Man hath the Light of the Father within himself, which is the Mighty Man Christ Jesus. Then Ethuasiast, excited in part by the common pretence of an extraordinary Light, reveal-
ed (as of a suddain) in those days in England, brake forth into open distraction. Then Joseph Salmon a present Member of the Army, publish'd his Blasphemies, and defended his Immoralities. He justified himself, and those of his way, saying, † That it was God who did Swear in them, and that it was their Liberty to keep Company with Women, for their Lust. Wyke, his Disciple *, kissed a Soldier three times, and said I Breathe the Spirit of God into thee. Salmon himself Printed a Pamphlet call'd a Rout, in which he set forth his Villainous self as the Christ of God, saying, † I am willing to become Sin for you, though the Lord in me knows no Sin. We love to sweat drops of Blood under all mens offences.---- We shall see of the Travel of our Souls. Enthusiasm, though not in this rankness of it, was now openly favour'd by Cromwell himself; who, together with Six Soldiers, prayed and preached at Whitehall. * On Sun. * His own temper was warmed with fits of Enthusiasm. after East. day † And he confessed it to a Person of Condition * (from Ann. 1649. II. of Indep. part 1. p. 153. † See View of the late trou- bles, p. 366. * E. M. L. C.

In process of time, his House of Commons, and he himself, were publickly disturb'd by that wild Spirit, in the raising of which they had been so unhappily Instrumental. A Quaker came to the Door of the House †, and drew his Sword, and cut those nigh him, and said, He was inspired by the Holy Spirit to kill every Man who sate in that Convention. And he himself was not only conspired against by those who call'd themselves, the free and well affected People of England *, but openly bespattered by the Ink of the Quakers in several Pamphlets †, and by their Clamours, affronted in his own Chappel where before his face, they gave bold interruption to his Preachers *.

† Whiclocks
Memoirs, A.
1649, p. 43.
Id. Ibid.

† Salmons
Rout. in Pref.
& p. 10, 11,
&c.

* On Sun.
after East. day
Ann. 1649. II.
of Indep. part
1. p. 153.
† See View of
the late trou-
bles, p. 366.

* E. M. L. C.

† Whit. I. Me-
moirs, A.
1654, p. 592.

* See their
Declar. in
A. 1655. in
Worl. Mem.
p. 606.

† See Ed. Bur-
rough's Trum-
pet of the
Lord sounded.
p. 2. A. 56.
† Whit. Me-

Other memoirs, p. 624.

Other Historical Memorials might be here produced, relating to the hopeful *Rise*, and mighty *Progress*, and equal *Declension* of the *Disciplinarian Party*. But, in such Cases, I choose rather to take off my Pen, than to lean too hard upon it. Yet the nature of my Argument did necessarily lead me to the former Remarks; and if useful Truth smarts, let Guilt suffer a Cure, and not kick against the Charitable Reporter.

In sum, the longer the Church of *England* was dissettled, the greater daily grew the Confusion; and the Division of Sects was multiplied, not unlike to that of Winds in the Mariners Compass, in which Artists have increas'd the Partitions, from four to two and thirty. Infomuch, that the very Distractions which were among us, did, in some measure, prepare the Way for the return of the King, and the Restitution of the Church: Men finding no other common Bottom, on which the Interests of Religion and Civil Peace might be establish'd.

Now, if the Dissenters could not then, when so fair Opportunities were in their Hands, carry on their cause to any tolerable Settlement; much less may they now hope to do it. For there are now many hindrances which did not then lie cross their Way.

First, The Platform of Discipline, so highly applauded, so earnestly contented for, during the Reigns of *Queen Elizabeth* and *King James*, hath now been in part Tried; and the presence of it (to omit other Reasons) hath abated the Reverence some had for it.

Secondly, There is not, at this time, such an Union amongst Dissenters, as appeared at the beginning of our late Troubles. The number of those Dissenters who were not for the *Discipline*, was then very considerable. But in a few Years they brake, as it were into Fractions of Fractions. Infomuch, that the Ministers of the Province of *London*, expressed the Estate of Things in the Year 47, on this manner, * *Instead of Unity and Uniformity in Matters of Religion, we are torn in pieces with Distractions, Schisms, Separations, Divisions, and Sub-divisions.*

* Testim. to the Truth of J. C. p. 30.

Thirdly, Those who then favour'd the *Discipline*, are much departed from their former Scheme of Government, inclining to *Independency*, which they once denied to be God's Ordinance †, and pleading for Toleration, which they once called, *The last and strongest hold of Satan.*

† Mr. Herl &c. The Title of Mr. Edwards's Book 1647: See Testam of M. n. p. 30.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, At the beginning of our Disturbances, many Men of Quality, and such who had a Zeal of God, favoured the Settlement of the *Discipline* in the simplicity of their Hearts. They had not then seen any Revolutions; they had not discovered the secret Springs of publick Motions; nor the vile Interests of many Men which lay conceal'd under the disguise of *pure Religion*. They saw (what all Men may see in all times) abuses in Church and State; and the very name of *Reformation* was sweet to them.

Now, notwithstanding the sincere Zeal, and the Power of these Men, the *Discipline* could not be long carried on; much less could it be perfected by them.

There is therefore at this time a much greater Improbability of Success in the like design. For many considerable Men, piously inclin'd, have seen their Error; and will not be a second time engaged: And they will not say of our late Changes, as the Protector did *, *That they were the Revolutions of God,*

and not Human Designs; That they were the Revolutions of Christ, upon whose shoulders the Government was lay'd. Speech in the House of Commons, Jan. 22 1657. They are not of the same mind with him who told the Commons, † *That if they acted Faith, then the Records of those times on their side, should bear thus to ad-* at the Dissolving of the Parliam. p. 29. *Posterity, the Book of the Wars and Councils of God.*

Also, since those days, thro' the laxation of *Discipline* during the license of the War, the discovery of great and black Hypocrisies, the multiplication of Parties and Opinions, the publishing of many Lewd and irreligious Books from unlicens'd Presses, *Atheism, Unbelief, A-* 33. † Mr. Caryl in Ep. Ded. bef. Serm. called, The Arraignment of hath made very formidable Advances. And they say † 45 that some undisguis'd *Scepticks* and *Atheists* have, some times since the King's Return, been much used in the Cause of our Dissenters. Now, if well-meaning Zeal could not establish the *Discipline*, it is not likely to be promoted, much less settled by the help of such hands of which the outides are not washed by so much as an External Form of Godliness.

The second Branch of the first End of Dissenters seems more improbable than the first, viz. The settling them selves as several distinct Parties, giving undisturbed Toleration to each other.

This seems not probable upon many accounts.

First, Some Dissenters believe some of the Parties to be incapable of Forbearance, as maintaining Principles destructive of Christian Faith and Piety. This Opini-

The second Branch of the first End of the Dissenters, viz. Union by mutual forbearance.

nion they still have (for instance sake) of *Antinomians*, *Quakers*, and *Muggletonians*.

† A. 1647.
Act of Assen.
p. 2.

And they formerly declaim'd against the Toleration of divers others. They published here (by Authority so called) an Act of the Assembly at *Edinburgh* †, against *Eraſtians*, *Independents*, and *Liberty of Conſcience*, bearing (as they ſpeak) *their publick Teſtimony* against them, not only as contrary to ſound Doctrine, but as more ſpecial Letts and Hindrances, as well to the *Scottiſh receiv'd Doctrine, Discipline and Government*, as to the *Work of Reformation and Uniformity in England and Ireland*.

Harmon.
Conſent.
A. 1648. p. 12.

The Miniſters of the Province within the County *Palatine of Lancaſter*, in their *Harmonious Conſent* † with the Miniſters of the Province of *London*, publiſh'd their Judgments in theſe zealous Words. *A Toleration would be a putting of a Sword into a mad man's hand* — *An appointing a City of Refuge in Mens Conſciences for the Devil to fly to* — *A proclaiming Liberty to the Wolves to come into Chriſt's Fold to prey upon his Lambs* — *A Toleration of Soul-murther (the greateſt murther of all others,) and for the eſta bliſhing whereof, damned Souls in Hell would accuſe Men on Earth. Neither would it be to provide for tender Conſciences, but to take away all Conſcience* — *If Error be not forcibly kept under, it will be Superiour.*

* Proteſtor's
Speech, Jan.
22. 1654. p. 25.

It ſeems, they were not then of the later Perſuaſion of the Proteſtor, who ſaid * concerning the People of ſeveral Judgments in this Land, *That they were All the Flock of Chriſt, and the Lambs of Chriſt, though perhaps under many unruly Paſſions and Troubles of Spirit, whereby they gave diſquiet to themſelves and others: And that they were not ſo to God as to us.*

Again, There is no firmneſs or ſocial influence in the nature of this Union. It is the Union of a multitude who meet and diſperſe at pleaſure. And he who propoſeth this way as the means to knit Men into Chriſtian Communion, is like a Projector, who ſhould deſign the keeping of the Stones together in the ſtrength of a firm and laſting Houſe, by forbearing the uſe of Cement. The Union that laſteth, is that of the Concord of Members in an Uniform Body.

Moreover, It is to be conſidered that there are no Parties in this or any other Nation, ſo exactly poiſed, that they have equal Numbers and Interests. There is always one of them which overballanceth the reſt. And one of the ſeveral ways muſt always be favoured

as

as the Religion of the State. And it is natural for the strongest side to attempt the subduing of the weaker. And though this be not soon effected, yet 'till one side getteth the mastery, the Parties remain, not as distinct Bodies settled in peace within themselves, and towards each other, but as Convulsions in the common Body of the State.

Some think this Inclination to the swallowing up of all other Parties to be found almost only in the *Romish Church*.

But here is something of it to be discerned (I will not say in all Churches, seeing I will understand the good Being of our own, which suffered *Bonner* himself to live) yet in all Factions and Parties; though the inequality of Power makes it not seem to be alike in all of them.

The Cat hath the same inward Parts with the Lion, though they differ much in size: And some such likewise they will find who dissect Humane Nature and Bodies Civil.

There is this Disposition of Men, whether they be the Politick, or the Conscientious.

The External Practice of all Parties is answerable to this inward Disposition.

There is this inward Disposition in Men who espouse any Faction, whether their Ends be designs of State, or of Religion.

Parties who are not (otherwise than in shew) concerned for Religion, will perpetually covet Power after Power. And Parties who are serious and conscientious in their way, whatsoever it is; will not remain in an indifferance of terms towards those who tread in contrary Paths, and with whom they do not maintain Communion. For therefore they withdraw from them, because they believe Communion with them to be unlawful. Otherwise they have no Judgment in the price of Peace and Unity, if they willingly part with it, when they may without sin enjoy it: and if they esteem their way sinful, and believe those Persons who remain without their Pale, and be so gone astray, as without Repentance, to be eternally lost; Charity it self will urge them to use all means probable towards the reducing of them. And they will be apt to think, that the suffering of them in their Wandrings, declares them to be contented with their condition.

External Practice of all Parties does shew plainly what is their inward Disposition.

All

All would do what is good in their own eyes ; but I do not perceive that any are willing to let others do so. Where there is Power, there is little Forbearance : And the same Men, as their Conditions alter, speak of *Mercy* or *Justice*.

Amongst those of the Party of *Donatus*, whose Schism opened so dangerous a Wound in the Churches of *Africa* ; all pleaded earnestly for Forbearance, whilst their Power was in its Minority. Yet St. *Austin* remindeth one of them * of a Practice contrary to their Profession, whilst they turn'd against the *Maximianists*, the edge of the *Theodosian Laws* ; and abus'd the Power which they had gotten under *Julian*, in oppressing as far as in them lay the Catholick Christians.

* Petil. ap. S. Aug. cont. Pe. til. l. 2. *Absit a nostra Conscientia ut ad nostram fidem aliquem compellamus, &c.*

† Mr. Calamy in Serm. call'd *The great danger of Cove-*

nant refusing. Ann. 46. p. 3.

* Lord Bacon's Pref. to Adv. of Learning.

† Whitlock's Memoirs, p. 276.

Amongst those of the Protestant Persuasion, the Heads of the *Discipline*, were plainly unwilling that any should have leave to make a Separation from their Body. And one of them †, with a mixture of Grief and Expostulation, thus discoursed before the Com-

*"The famous City of London is become an Amsterdam ; Separation from Our Churches is countenanced ; Toleration is cried up ; Authority lieth asleep. Every one would have Power to rowle up it self, and maintain his Cause. And indeed it is, and has been too often in Religion, as it is and was in Philosophy, Where the divers Sects do not contend meerly for the enlarging the bounds of Philosophical Arts in a sincere and solid inquiry * , but for the Translating the Empire of Opinion, and settling it upon themselves. The same Men who pleaded for Forbearance in this Church, and removed themselves into New-England (as by themselves was said) for the Liberty of their Conscience or Persuasion ; when once they arrived there, and made a Figure in that Government, they refused Indulgence to the Anabaptists and Quakers, and used them (as to this day they do) with great Severity. Those Commons who in the Year 47 † made an Order, For the giving of Indulgence to tender Consciences ; did at the same time make another Order, That the Indulgence should not extend to tolerate such who used the Common Prayer.*

Some who do not well understand the Policy of the *Dutch*, do believe it to be otherwise in those *Nether-*lands. But by their Constitution, none have liberty to speak against any publick Error or Corruption of which the States shall stamp their Authority. An

Episcopius * complained that the *Calvinists* would tolerate none whom they had power to punish. There are now great numbers of his own Remonstrant Party, who, when any Juncture of Affairs gives them Encouragement, are apt to contend for Superiority. The Parties in their Sermons and Writings, speak with bitter Zeal against each other: And where the ordinary Conversation of Men of different Judgments is peaceable amongst them; divers who mind Traffick more than Religion, seem rather to be an Heterogeneous Body frozen together by a cold Indifference, than a Society united by Christian Love.

In the Church of Rome the several Orders who at present mortally hate one another, if they were not restrained by the force of the common Polity, they would soon devour one another. We are not without a remarkable Instance in this kind, published by a *Dominican Bishop*, and a *Capuchin Frier*. Certain *Dominicans* * had seated themselves nigh the River of *Plate* in *Paraguay*, where there are Gold Mines in the Earth, and Gold Sands in the Rivers. Of this the *Jesuits*, who have long Ears, had good Intelligence. They desired to go thither, in order to the further Instruction of the *American People*, and the Education of Youth. They obtained leave, procured Letters of Credence, were furnished with Money for the Voyage. After having gotten sure footing, they soon removed the *Dominicans* and *Spanish Laity*, and established themselves.

Among the *Socinians*, the great Asserters of Liberty in Religion, both in thinking and speaking; though they cannot impose, because they have not yet been any where (that I know of) the prevailing Party, yet they shew sometimes what Spirit they are of.

Gittichius was, beyond all good manners, troublesome to a *Socinian* of better temper (I mean † *Ruarus*) because he had chosen to fast one Day in a Week, and had taken *Friday* for the Day, though without any fixed purpose.

Among the *Quakers* themselves, whose Principle seems to be the Guidance of each Man by his Personal Persuasion, there want not Signs of that fierce heat with which their Light is accompanied. When some had formed them into a Society, and gotten the Governance into their hands, they *Excommunicated* others; they suffered them not to Marry, or Bury in their manner,

* *Episc. Exalt. Theol. Cap. Op. Vol. 1. Par. 1. p. 185.*

* See *L. tres. sincere. Trois. partie. Sixieme. Lettre, p. 111.*

† *Ruari. Epist. par. 1. p. 415, 416.*

* See Spirit
of the Hart,
p. 12. 13, &c.
† P. 27.
* P. 41.

ner, who would not be guided by what they called the *Light of the Body*, and the *Light of Ancient Friends* *. George Fox declared he had Power to bind and loose whom he pleased †, and said in a Great Assembly * that he never lik'd the word Liberty of Conscience, and would have no Liberty given to Presbyterians, Papists, Independents, and Baptists.

The Principal
End of the
Dissenters the
first part of it.

From the Subordinate End of the Dissenters, I pass to the Principal; and begin with the first part of it, the removal of Popery. A very good and commendable end. And I heartily pray to God to prosper all Christians who pursue it by fit and lawful ways.

But the Methods of Dissenters do not so well lead to it as those of the Established Church.

Bare Reason maketh this manifest. It may be also proved to us by Historical Inference.

This likewise is the Judgment of the Papists themselves, who take their measures from this Principle, that they shall enter in through the Breaches of the Church of England.

First. Common Reason sheweth, that the Interruption which may by Dissention be given to this Church, will rather weaken than improve the Protestant Interest, both at Home and Abroad.

* Florentissia
Anglia Ocel-
lus ille Eccle-
siarum Pecu-
lium Christi
singulare, &c.

Abroad, The Protestant Interest will suffer much in the overthrow of this Church. For, by such means a principal Wheel is taken out of the Frame of the Reformation. Nay, Signior Diodati * was wont to praise it in a more excellent Metaphor, and to call it the Eye of the Reformed Churches; and it is plain to considering Men, that the Church of England, which had greater regard to the Primitive Pattern, than some others of the Reformation, can give a more full and unperplexed Answer to all the Objections of the Romanists, than some other Churches, who are cramped in a few points unwarily admitted. If therefore Dissentions put out this Eye of the Protestant Churches, the dark Doctrines and Traditions of Popery will the sooner spread themselves over Reformed Christendom.

At home, The Dissentment of the Church of England will sooner introduce than root out Popery. I am constrain'd thus to judge by the following Considerations.

First, The design of keeping out Popery by the Ruin of this Church, is like the preposterous way of securing the Vineyard by pulling up of the Fence, or

of keeping out the Enemy by the removal of our Bulwark; under that name this Church is commonly spoken of, and they do not flatter it, who give it that Title. Its Constitution is Christian, and it is strong in its Nature; and if such a Church hath not ability (with God's assistance) to resist the Assaults of *Romish Power*, much less have they who dissent from it. And it is *Fanaticism* properly so called, or Religious Frenzy, to lay aside a more probable means, and to trust that God will give, to means which are much less probable, supernatural Aid and Success.

God supporteth a good Cause by weak Means (if they are the only means he hath put into our Power) against a bad Cause, though externally potent. But he, who in Cases of Emergence assisteth honest Impotence and Infirmary, will never work Miracles in favour of Mens Presumptions and Indiscretions.

The *Romanists* are a mighty Body of Men; and though there are Intestine Feuds betwixt the Secular and Regular Clergy, as likewise betwixt the several Orders, yet they are all united into one common Polity, and grafted into that one stock of the Papal Headship. They are favoured in many places by great Men; they have variety of Learning; they pretend to great Antiquity, to Miracles, to Martyrs without number, to extraordinary Charity and Mortification; they have the Nerves of Worldly Power, that is Banks of Money, and a large Revenue: They have a Scheme of Policy always in readiness: There are great Numbers of Emissaries posted in all places for the conveying of Intelligence, and the gaining of Profelytes; they take upon them all Shapes, and are bred to all the worldly Arts of Insinuation. There is given to their way, in the *Fargon* of Mr. Coleman *, * *Coll. of Lett.* a very fit name of *Trade, Traffick, Merchandise.* p. 8. &c.

Against all this Craft and Strength, what (under God) can *Protestants* oppose which is equal to the Power of the Church of *England*? A Church Primitive, Learned Pure, and not embased with the mixtures of Enthusiasm or Superstition.

A Church, which is able to detect the Forgeries and Impostures of *Rome*, which hath not given advantage to her by running from her into any *Extream*; which is a National Body already form'd; a Body both *Christian* and *Legal*; a Body which commendeth it self to the Civil Powers by the Loyalty of its Constitution; a Body which hath in it great Numbers of People judi-

† See L. de
Moulin's Ad-
vancer, &c.
p. 26.

* De Confess.
Adver. H.
Hamond, c. 1.
p. 97, 98.

diciously devout, and who are judged only to be few †, because they are not noisie, but prudent, though truly exemplary, in their Religion.

And there is in the Church of England something more considerable than number, for Union is stronger than Multitude. Take the Character of this Church from Monsieur Daille *, a Man whose Circumstances were not likely to lead him in this matter, into any partiality of Judgment; and who, at that time, was engaged in a Learned Controversie with one of our Divines. The Character is this: *As to the Church of England, purged from Foreign wicked Superstitious Worshipps and Errors, either impious or dangerous, by the Rule of the Divine Scriptures, approved by so many and such Illustrious Martyrs, abounding with Piety towards God, and Charity towards Men, and with most frequent Examples of good Works, flourishing with an encrease of most learned and wise Men from the beginning of the Reformation to this time; I have always had it in just esteem, and till I die, I shall continue in the same due veneration of it.* And indeed it is to me a matter of astonishment, that any Men have been beyond the Seas, and made Observations upon other Churches and States, should be displeased at ours, which so much excel them.

Now, is it probable that such a Church as this is should have less strength in it for the resisting of Popery, than an inferior number of divided Parties, of which the most sober and most accomplish'd is neither so Primitive, nor so Learned, nor so United, nor so Numerous, nor so Legal; and against which it will be objected by the Romans, that it is of Yesterday?

Among these Parties there are some, who have not fully declared themselves. And who knows whether they have not a Reserve for the Romish Religion, against a favourable Opportunity, though sometimes they speak of Rome as of Babylon? I mean those People who are called Quakers, who speak in general of their Light, and in such doubtful manner, that Inquisitive Men cannot yet understand from what quarter of the Heavens it shineth. The Men of Design amongst them may embrace any Religion, and the Melancholy will make a tolerable Order amongst the Romans; and the Priests will find for them a second St. Bruno.

Again, There are some who though they have declared themselves against Popery, yet they have scarce any formed way of keeping it out: For what hindreth a crafty Jesuit from gathering a particular Con-

Congregation out of many others, and modelling of it by degrees according to his pleasure? And what a Gap do they leave open for Seducers, who take out of the way all Legal Tests, and admit Men, who are Strangers to them, to officiate amongst them, upon bare pretence of Spiritual Illumination?

Furthermore, the *Romanists* have more powerful ways of drawing Men from the Parties of the *Dissenters*, than they have of enticing them from the Church of *England*; for such Men (too frequently) go out from us through weakness of Imagination, for which the Church of *Rome* hath variety of Gratifications.

They will offer, to the *Severe*, such strictnesses as are not consistent with the General Laws of a National Church, which being framed for Men of such various *Conditions*, must have some Scope and Latitude, though no License in it; and many of those who now join themselves to the Dissenting Parties, would then chuse to be admitted as Members of this or the other Superstitious Fraternity: And it is (at least) my private Conjecture, that if the Revenue of the Religious Houses which were dissolved, had been judiciously applied to the service of Men, either weak in mind, or indisposed by temper, or singular in their *Inclinations*, amongst the Reformed, there might have been a Diversity here (I mean such as there is in our present Colleges) without a Schism.

Likewise, they have *Mental Prayer*, and (as they call them) *Spiritual Eructations*, for those who contemn or scruple *Forms* *.

They have *mystical* Phrases for such who think they have a new Notion when they darken Understanding with Words. And accordingly, the third part of the *Rule of Perfection* (a very Mystical Book, written by by Father Benet a *Capuchin*) was in the Year 46, Reprinted in *London* *, with a New Title, and without the Name of the Author; and it passed, amongst some of the Parties, for a Book containing very sublime Evangelical Truths. And it pleased some *Enthusiasts*, when they read in it, *That Christ's Passion was to be practis'd and beheld as it was in our selves, rather than that which is considered at Jerusalem* †.

Also, they use much Gesture, and great shew of Zeal in Preaching, and have singular ways of moving the zealous Temper of the *English*, from whence some of them, in *Rome* it self, had the name of *Kneek-breasts* * given to them. A *Romish* Preacher comes forth

* See *Rational Discourse of Prayer*, chiefly of *Mystic*. Contemp. c. 14. p. 74.

† *A bright Star* centring in *Christ* our *Perfection*. Printed for H. C. *verton*, in *Pope's* *History* of *Alley*, 1646. p. 189.

‡ Ch. 13. p. 189. *Picchia* per- *ti* *Inglefi*. S. *R. C.* *Posth.* *forth* p. 125.

forth out of an obscure Cloyster into the Pulpit, and appears all Heavenly in the Exercise, And having excited a warmth in their Affection, he retires again, and does not mix with Conversation, and is not observed (as other Ministers) by many Eyes, and the People never seeing him but in this Divine Figure, look upon him as an Angel coming to them out of Heaven, and then ascending thither again.

It may be observed also, that the *Romanists* have greater *shews of Self denial* for the moving of *English Piety* than the *Dissenters*. They have rough Cords, mean Garments, bare Feet, Disciplines, Whips, Pretences of not touching Money, or enjoying Property, though some of these are often no other than Arts used by ordinary Beggars.

Again, they have ways not only of humouring the *Infirmity*, but even the *toppishness* of human Nature. *Processions*, and other Rites of the *Romish Religion*, are so ordered as to be Games for Diverſion, and the *Maß with Scenes* pleaseth, though it be not understood.

Dissenters do not think that Popery may be very easily subdued by their Arms: but if Recluses were once crept out of their dark Cells as Serpents from under the deadly Night shade they would have cause to alter their Opinions and not to think too highly of themselves, after a wiſful removal of the Church of *England*, which is sufficient (under God) for this Encounter. This Church designs to make Men good, by making them first Judicious, as far as means can do it. But some others desire to bring them to their side by catching of their Imaginations; and by that way they can neither reform nor fix them. Some new Device shall in time, bring them over to a new Party.

Dissention it self amongst *Protestants* weakeneth their Interest; and that which weakens one side strengthens another.

And many Men, intangled in Controversie, and wearied with endless Wrangling, are too apt for meer ease and quiet sake, to cast themselves, in servile manner into the Arms of pretended *Infallibility*.

Our Dissentions have already introduced too much of that which is the very Spirit of *Jesuitism*, the doing of Evil that pretended Good may come of it, the serving of a Cause by any means, whether they be just or unjust.

Some Dissenters do accidentally prepare the way for

for *Romish* Religion, by running into another Extream upon pretence of a voiding Popery, by decrying the Church of *England* as *Antichristian* and *Popish*, and by condemning that as *Popish* which is Christian and Decent. [As Episcopacy, Liturgy, Observations of the Nativity of Christ, and other Festivals, Reverence of Bodily Gesture, particularly in receiving the Holy Communion, Preservation of Places, and Things set a part for Holy Uses, with Reverend Care] By this means they bring Popery into Reputation. Men will be apt to say, if such a Body as the Church of *England* be *Popish*, it is fit we sit down and consider of it; for surely they are not so inclined without weighty Reasons. If the Clergy of it be inclined to that Religion, the Introduction of which, together with great Numbers of the *Popish* Clergy, will diminish their Preferment; it must be the Power of the Truth which moveth them against their Worldly Interest. They will continue their Argument, and say further, If such good Things as these above mention'd be *Romish*, and it be lawful to judge of the whole by the parts of it which are before us, surely that which is *Popish* is also Primitive and Evangelical. That which we have examin'd is good, and that which we have not, may probably be of the same kind.

Secondly, The History of our late Revolutions sheweth, that Popery will not be smother'd in the Ruins of the Church of *England*, but rather be advanced upon them.

It made great progress in the late Times; insomuch, that the Dissenters do remove the Odium of the late King's execrable Murther from themselves, and lay it, upon the *Jesuits*, thereby tacitly acknowledging, that they had so great a Power over some of them, as to make them to become their Instruments for the cutting off the *Lord's Anointed*. For if they will not allow *Cromwel* and *Ireton*, and some others of that Order, to have been Dissenters, properly so called; yet certainly they must not deny that Name to Mr. *Peters*, Mr. *John Goodwin*, and many like to them, who appeared publickly in that very black and insolent Wickedness. How far it is true that the *Jesuits* influenc'd those Councils, I do not now examine, nor does my Talent lie in Mysteries of State. But that in the late Revolutions, Popery was not routed out, no Man can remain ignorant who is of competent Age and had

had not perfectly lost the use of his Memory, though he has made the most negligent Observations.

* *Hist. des troubles de la grand, Bret. a Paris 1661 l. 3 p. 165. See short view of the late Troubles, p. 564.*

(a) *Arbit. Government p. 28.*

(b) *See Whitl. Memoirs, p. 279, 280, 282.*

(c) *Exact Col. p. 647.*

(d) *Id. Ibid. p. 404.*

† *Gangrena. p. 10. par 2.*

(e) *Narr. sent up to the Lords from the Bishop of Hereford, p. 7.*
(f) *Prot Declaration O. 31. 1655.*

(g) *In the life of Bish. Fisher, p. 260. 261.*
(h) *V. Elench Mor. part 2. p. 341.*

(i) *H. Indep. part 2. p. 245.*
&c.

Robert Mentit de Salmonet * a Scotchman, and a Secular Priest, in actual Exercise of Communion with the Church of Rome, hath publickly taken notice of the many Priests slain at *Edge-Hill*, and of two Companies of *Walloons*, and other *Catholicks* (as he is pleased to stile them) in the Service of the States.

It hath been commonly said (a) that *Gifford* the Jesuit appeared openly in the Year 47 amongst the *Agitators*, and that his Pen was used in the Paper drawn up at a Committee in the Army, and called the *Agreement of the People*. (b) *K. Charles* the Martyr speaketh of such things as notorious, in one of his Printed Declarations, (c) *All men know* (said he) the great number of *Papists* which serve in their Army, Commanders, and others.

In the year 49, (d) Those in the House were acquainted with divers Papers, taken in a French-man's Trunk at *Rye*, discovering a Popish Design to be set on foot in England, with Commissions from the Bishop of *Calcedon*, by Authority of the Church of Rome, to Popish Priests, and others, for settling the Discipline of the Romish Church in England and Scotland.

Mr. Edwards † reports, from *Mr. Mills* a Common Council-man, who was so informed by a knowing Papist, that the *Romanist* did generally shelter themselves under the Vizor of Independency. It is certain, that a College of Jesuits was established at *Come* (e) in the year 52. And in a Paper found there, mention was made of 155 reconciled that year to the Church of Rome. *Oliver* himself used these words in a Declaration published by the Advice of his Council: (f) *It is not only commonly observed, but there remains with us somewhat of Proof, that Jesuits have been found among some discontented parties in this Nation, who are observed to quarrel and fall out with every Form or Administration in the*

Church or State. Dr. *Bayly* (g) the *Romanist* openly Courted *Oliver* as the present hopes of Rome, and with a Flattery as gross as the Jingle was ridiculous, called him *Oliva Vera*: And one of his Physicians (h) hath said of him, that he was once negotiating with the *Romanists* for Toleration, but brake off the Bargain, partly because they came not to his price, and partly because he feared it would be offensive to the People.

It is also publickly told us, (i) that an Agreement was made in 49, even with *Owen O Neal*, that bloody

by *Romanist*; and that he, in pursuance of the Interest of the State, so called, raised the Siege of *Londonderry*.

A great Door was opened to *Romish* Emissaries when the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy were, by publick Order, taken away: For they were Tests of *Romanism*. Likewise the Doctrine of the unlawfulness of an Oath, revived in those days, by *Roger Williams*, (*k*) *Samuel Gorton*, and others, helped equivocating (*k*) See Mr. Papists, to an evasion, as (*l* fear) it may do at this *Cotton's* *Lr.* day, among the *Quakers*. So we may be induced to Exam. 2. 44. believe, by comparing present with former Trans. 2. 4. 5. Sim- actions. For we are informed, that in the Reign of plicit defence King *James*, (*l*) *Thomas Newton* pretended to have had a 2. 1646. p. 22. Vision of the Virgin Mary, who said to him, Newton. Min of Prov. see thou do not take the Oath of Allegiance: And being of Lond. Te- of this publicly examined at the Commission-Table, and (*l*) *Gee's* Foot asked how he knew it to be the Virgin Mary which ap- out of the peared? He answered, I know it was she, for she ap- Saur, p. 58. peared unto me in the form of her Assumption. 59. d. 1621.

It was the Church of *England*, which in our late Troubles principally fortified and entrenched the True Protestant Religion against the Assaults of *Rome*.

This Church was still in being, though in Adversity. She had strong Virals, and did not die, notwithstanding there was some Distemper in her Estate. There was still a Constitution where Primitive Order and Decency might be found, and in which Men of Sobriety might be fixed. And great numbers of the Church-men, by their constant adherence to their Principles, under publick contempt and heavy pressure, gained daily on the People, and convinced the World that they were not so Popish and Earthly-minded as Popular Clamour had represented them. Also their Learned Books and Conferences reduced some, and established many, and we owe a part of the stability of Men in those times to God's Blessing on the Writings of Archbishop *Laud*, Mr. *Chillingworth*, Dr. *Bramhall*, Dr. *Cosins*, Dr. *Hammond*, and others.

Last of all, It is the Opinion of the Papists themselves, that their Cause is promoted by our Dissentions; and according to these measures of Judgement they govern their Councils.

This was the Opinion of the Jesuit *Companella*, in his Discourse touching the *Spanish Monarchy*, written about the Year 1600; and in 54 publish'd at *London* in (*m*) *Compan.* *Disc. of Span.* Language: (*m*) *Concerning the weakening of the English Mon.* 25. (*say* p. 157.

(says that Jesuit) *there can no better way possibly be found out, than by causing Divisions and Dissentions among themselves.——And as for their Religion,——it cannot be so easily extinguished and rooted out here, unless there were some certain Schools set up in Flanders, by means of which there should be scattered abroad the Seed of Schism, &c.*

And whether these kinds of Seeds have not come from hence to us, as well as those better ones of the *Brabant Husbandry*, remaineth not now any longer a Question.

* *Comm. Polit.* It was the Advice of the *Jesuit Controvers* *, To make
1 2. Chap. 13 as much use of the Divisions of Enemies, as the Agreement
Sect. 9. of Friends.

After this manner it is that they manage themselves; they endeavour to widen the breach, in order to the introducing of Popery into a divided Nation. They will have hopes, as long as we have Divisions. They will believe; whilst they see the Humours are in conflict, that the Body will be at last dissolved. If they will hope for Resettlement, as they declare they do, upon such inconsiderable grounds, as the Printing of a *Monasticon* † or the *Provincial* * of *Lynwood* amongst us, though in the Quality of History rather than of Title or Law; what will they not expect from our unchristian Distempers, and from our forbearing of Communion with the established Church, as it were the Synagogue of Satan?

By this Artifice it is that they gain Profelytes. They expose the Protestants as a *divided* People. They demand of Injudicious Men, how they can in Prudence, joyn with those who are at variance among themselves? Though at this time, in the Church of *England* it self, there is much more agreement than in the Church of *Rome*, in which (say they) there are great numbers of more private *Deists* *, and *Socinians*, and some (we are certain) who publish it to the World † that the *Primacy* is *Antichristian*; in which there are Solemn and Publick Assemblies who declare openly against one another in the point of the Papal Supremacy; and shew by so doing, that (in their Opinion) their common head cannot certainly tell the nature of his Headship.

The second p. There remaineth to be considered, the *second more*
of the second *Principal End*, the advancing Christian Religion, in
or more prin- these Kingdoms, to greater *Purity* and *Perfection*.
cipal end of But neither in this is their expectation likely to be
the Dissenters answered. For

† *Journal des*
Scavans de l.
Ann. 1665.
p. 140.
* *Journ. Eccl.*
de l. Ann.
1666. p. 230.
233.

* *Polit. of*
France.
† *Moyens Surs*
pour la
conversion de
rous les Here-
tiques.

For First, *The means towards the settling of themselves is the Dissettlement of that which is well fixed.* And this is the way, not to a greater Purity in Religion, but to the Corruption of it.

For, it removeth Charity which is the Spirit of the Christian Religion. It letteth loose great numbers who cannot govern themselves; it moveth men to live *Atheists* and *Idolaters*, to pour Contempt upon the Church of Christ; and confirmeth them in their evil course. It exposeth the Church as a Prey to the Common Enemy. Thus the Divisions in *Africa*, gave encouragement to the Arms of the barbarous Nations; and those in the *Egyptian* Churches, made way for the *Saracens*. And the Proposal of the maintenance of Charity and pure Religion, by the overthrow of a tolerable Ecclesiastical Constitution, is as improbable a project as that of *Flammack*, who in *Henry* the VII's time *, proposed a Rebellion without a Breach of the Peace. * L. Bac. II.

And it is here to be consider'd, that these who dissent from a National Church, do generally make use of such Junctures, as are apter to debase, than refine Religion. They often move for Alterations in the Church when there is a great heat and ferment in the State: And in such seasons, the Form of a Church may be pulled in sunder, but there is not temper enough, and coolness of unbyas'd consideration to set it together to advantage. Such times are the Junctures of State Dissenters, and amongst them Revolutions generally begin, though without the pretence of Reforming Religion, they are hot carried on amongst the People. For it will not serve their purpose to say plainly, they are against the Government, because the Government is against their Interests. Now when well-meaning Dissenters are in the Hands of such wordly Power, they will not be able to establish what they think is surest, but that which pleaseth their secular Leaders. A change in the Church naturally produceth some change in the State; and in such changes who can secure the event for the better? The words of Bp *Andrews* †, about the midst of the Reign of K. *James*, toucht this point; and they doubtless are worth our Observation. *When* (saith he) *they have made the State present nought, no Remedy; We must have a better for it, and so a change needs. What change? Why! Religion, or the Church Government, or somewhat (they know not what well) stand a while, ye shall change your Religion* said they of this day [the Gunpowder-Traytors] and have one for it wherein, to your content,

Set. 9. on.

Nov. 5. 1614.

fort, you shall not understand a word (not you of the People) what you either sing or pray, and for variety you shall change a whole Communion for an half. Now a blessed exchange, were it not? What say some others? You shall change for a fine new Church-Government; a Presbytery would do this better for you than an Hierarchy (and perhaps) not long after, a Government of States, than a Monarchy. Meddle not with these Changers.

Now when a State is either disturbed or dissolved, Men cannot foresee all the ill Consequences of it. When the Vessel is stirred, the Lees come up, which lay before undiscerned in the Mass of the Liquor; and so it is in Religion; it is not fined, but rather rendered less pure by motions in the Body Spiritual or Civil. Then Politicians use conscientious Instruments no further than they serve a present purpose, and for new Purposes they find new Instruments. One of the Assembly of Divines, (a) discoursed on this manner at a publick Fast, *Have not these Trumpets and these poor Pitchers had their share; and a good share too, in bringing down the Walls of Jericho, and the Camp of Midian? and have not they (like the Story in Ezekiel) if I may so express it, Prophesied you up an Army? The witness of these things is in the whole Kingdom, and a Witness of them is in your own Bosoms.* Yet the Preacher was very sensible at the same time, that those whom they had helped to Power, were turning it against them, and breaking them to pieces by dashing Independence against them. Aspiring Men make fair Promises, till they have gained their point; but when that is once secured, they take other measures. They say, (b) that Maximilian, for the gaining of Votes in order to the Empire, used secret Preachings to please the Protestant Princes [the Elector Palatine, the Dukes of Saxony and Brandenburg] and went openly to Mass to please the Popish Bishops of Mentz, Trier and Cologne. Also the Claims of the Worldly increase with their Power: And (for illustration sake) when the House being garbell'd, had much less Right, but more Force, (the Army as yet agreeing with them, and the good King being in their hands,) then they gave to the Declarations of their Pleasure the Title; not as before of Ordinances; but of Acts of Parliament (c).

Oliver likewise declared plainly, (d) *That there was as much need to keep the Cause by power as to get it.* And being potent, he entered the House, and mocked the Masters, and commanded with insolent disdain, *that there was as much need to keep the Cause by power as to get it.* And being potent, he entered the House, and mocked the Masters, and commanded with insolent disdain, *that there was as much need to keep the Cause by power as to get it.*

(a) D. J. L.
on Psal. 4.
4 Feb. 24.
A. 1647.

(b) Melvil's
Mem. p. 33.

(c) Whit. Mem.
moirs. p. 363.

(d) Speech at
the Dissol. of
the House,
Jan. 22. 1654.
R. 23.

That Bowle † (meaning the Mace of the Speaker) † Id. ibid. should be taken away. Men may intend well, but using the help of the illegal secular Arm, they can never secure what they propose, but frequently render that which was well settled much worse by their unhinging of it.

By such means it comes to pass, that the Civil State is embroiled, and Religion sensibly decays, instead of growing towards Perfection, where publick Order is interrupted, and men gain a Liberty which they know not how to use.

Secondly, It appeareth by the History of our late Revolutions, which began with pretence of a more pure Religion, that our Dissentions occasioned great Corruptions both in Faith and Manners.

Then the War was Preached up as the Christian Cause. And one of the City-Soldiers, mortally wounded at Newberry-fight, was applauded (in an Epistle (e) to the Houses) as one whose Voice was more (e) Hill's Ser. than human, when he cried out, O that I had another call'd Temple Life to lose for Jesus Christ. Then this Doctrine (so work. A 1644. very immoral and unchristian) was by some (f) (f) D. Crispian preached, and by great Numbers embraced. The Ser. call'd, Our Lord hath no more to lay to the charge of an Elect Person, sins are already laid on Christ in the height of iniquity, and the excess of Riot, and committing all the Abominations that can be committed P. 274, 275.

—than he hath to lay to the charge of a Saint triumphant in Glory. Then certain Soldiers (g) enter'd a (g) H. of In-Church with five Lights, as Emblems of five things dep. part 2. thought fit to be extinguished, viz. The Lord's day, p. 152, 153. Tythes, Ministers, Magistrates, the Bible. Then by a publick Intelligencer who called himself Mercurius Britannicus (h) the Lord Primate Usher himself was (h) Merc. Brit. reproached as an old Doting Apostating Bishop. In N. 13. Nov. 4. instances are endless; but, what need have we of further Witnesses than the Lords and Commons, and the Ministers of the Province of London, whose Complaints and Acknowledgments are hereby subjoined.

The Lords and Commons, in one of their Ordinances (i) use these Words: We — have thought (i) Die Jovis. (lest we partake of other mens sins, and thereby be in danger to receive of their Plagues) to set forth this our deep sense of the great dishonour of God, and perillous condition at this Kingdom is in, through the abominable Blasphemies and damnable Heresies vented and spread abroad therein, tending to the Subversion of the Faith, Contempt of the Ministry and Ordinance of Jesus Christ.

(k) Testim. ing, Instead (k) of extirpating Heresy, Schism, Prophaneness; we have such an impudent and general inundation of all these Evils, that multitudes are not ashamed to press and plead for publick formal, and universal Toleration

And again, *We the Ministers of Jesus Christ, do hereby testify to all our Flocks, to all the Kingdom, and to all the Reformed Churches, as our great dislike of Prelacy, Erastianism, Brownism, and Independency: so our utter abhorrence of Anti-Scripturism, Popery, Arianism, Socinianism, Arminianism, Antinomianism, Anabaptism, Libertinism, and Familism; with all such like, now too rife among us.*

Thirdly, Some Dissenters, by the Purity of Religion, mean agreeableness of Doctrine, Discipline, and Life, to the dispensation of the New Testament, and a removal of human Inventions: And thus far the Notion is true; but, with reference to our Church, it is an unwarrantable Reflection; for it hath but one Principal Rule, and that is the Holy Scripture; and subordinate Rules in pursuance of the general Canons, in Holy Writ, are not to be called in our Church, any more than in the pure and Primitive Christian Church, whose Pattern it follows, human Imaginations, but Rules of Ecclesiastical Wisdom and Discretion.

But there are others among the Dissenters, who by the Purity of Religion, mean a Simplicity as opposed to Composition, and not to such mixtures as corrupt the Circumstances or parts of Worship, which in themselves are pure. Quakers, and some others, believe their way the purer, because they have taken out of it Sacraments and external Forms of Worship, and endeavoured (as they phrase * it) to bring the Peoples minds out of all Visibles. By equal reason the Papists may say their Eucharist is more pure than that of the Protestants, because they have taken the Cup from it. But that which maketh a pure Church, is like that which maketh a pure Medicine; not the fewness of the Ingredients, but the good quality of them how many soever they be; and the aptness of their Nature for the procuring of Health.

Men who have this false Notion of the Purity of Religion, distil it till it evaporates; and all that is left is a dead and corrupt Sediment. And here I have judged the following words of Sir Walter Rawleigh not unfit to be by me transcribed, and considered by all. * The Reverend Care which Moses had in all that

* G. Fox. in
J. Perrot's
Hiddenthings
brought to
light, p. 11.

* Hist. of the
World, lib. 2.
par. 1. c. 5.
p. 249.

belonged

belonged even to the outward and least parts of the Tabernacle, Ark, and Sanctuary----is now so forgotten and cast away in this Superfine Age, by those of the Family, by the Anabaptist, Brownist, and other Sectaries, as all Cost and Care bestowed and had of the Church, wherein God is to be served and worshipped, is accounted a kind of Popery, and as proceeding from an Idolatrous Disposition: Insomuch, as Time would soon bring to pass (as if it were not resisted) that God would be turned out of Churches into too Bains, and from thence again into the Fields and Mountains, and under the Hedges; and the Officers of the Ministry (robbed of all Dignity and Respect) be as contemptible as these places; all Order, Discipline, and Church Government, left to newness of Opinion, and Mens Fancies: Yea, and soon after, as many kinds of Religions would spring up as there are Parish Churches within England; every contentious and ignorant Person clothing his Fancy with the Spirit of God, and his Imagination with the Gift of Revelation; insomuch, as when the Truth, which is but one, shall appear to the simple multitude, no less variable than contrary to it self, the Faith of Men will soon after dye away by degrees, and all Religion be held in Scorn and Contempt.

Fourthly, If several contrary Parties be established by way of Sufferance; no progress is likely to be made towards the perfecting of Religion; For the suffering of divers Errors is not the way to the Reforming of them. One Principle only can be true, and the blinding such as are contrary with it, createth the greatest of Impurities, a mixture of that which is prophane with that which is sacred.

Fifthly, Many Dissenters are not likely to erect a Model by which Christianity may be improved amongst us, because they lay aside Rules of Discretion, and rely not on God's Assistance in the use of good means, but depend wholly upon immediate illumination, without the aids of Prudence; and some of the more sober amongst them, have inclined too much towards the Extream.

In Reformation (said one † in his Sermons before † Mr. S. Sym-
the Commons) do not make Reason your Rule, nor Line son in A. 1643.
you go by. It is the Line of all the Papists---The Reform. Pre-
second Covenant doth forbid, not only Reason, but all Di servat. p. 126.
vine Reason that is not contained by Institution in the 127.
Worship of God.---God's Worship hath no ground in any
Reason, but God's Will.

Sixthly,

Sixthly, There are already provided in this Church; more probable means for the promoting of pure Religion, than those which have been proposed by all, or any of the Dissenting Party. It is true, each Church is capable of improvement, by the change of absolute Words, Phrases, and Customs; by the addition of Forms upon new Occasion; by adjusting discreetly some Circumstantials of External Order. But, to change the present Model for any other that has yet been offered to Publick Consideration, is to make a very judicious Bargain. There are in it all the necessaries to Faith and Godliness; there is preserved Primitive Discipline, Decency, and Order: And under the means of it, there are great numbers grown up into such an Improvement of Judicious Knowledge, and useful, prudent, serious Piety; that it requireth a laborious Scrutiny to find Parallels to them in any Nations under the Heavens.

I do not take pleasure in distastful Comparisons: Yet I ought not (sure) to pass by this unthankful negligence, that excellent Spirit which God hath raised up among the Writers and Preachers of this Church: Their Labours being so instrumental towards the right information of the Judgment, and the amendment of the Lives of unprejudiced Hearers.

It must be confessed, that there is some trifling on all sides: And it will be so whilst Men are Men. But there is now (blessed be God) as little of it in the Church of *England* as in any Age. And the very few who do it, appear plainly to be what they are, Phantasticks, and Actors, rather than Preachers. But amongst the Parties, the folly and weakness, puts on a more venerable pretence, and they give vent to it with studied shews of mighty seriousness, and deliver it solemnly as the immediate Dictate of God's holy Spirit. And I cannot but call to mind one Minister in

† *Rath on Dan.*
6. 26. p. 8. A.
1643. before
the Commons

this Church, who would (for Instance sake) have deliberately used these words of Mr. *Rutherford*, in a solemn Audience †, after this manner: *God permits sins, and such spoken sins, that there may be room in the Play for pardoning grace.*

It seemeth also not unfit for me to take notice, that the changes formerly made in Church Matters in *England* by Dissenters, were not so conducive in their nature, to the edifying of the Body of Christ, as the things illegally removed. The Doctrine of God's secret Decrees taught in their *Catechism*, was a stronger and more improper kind of Meat than that with which the Church of *England* hath fed her Children. Ordination by a Bishop, accompanied with Presbyters, was more certain and satisfactory than that by Presbyters without a Bishop.

There was not that Sobriety in many of the present and unstudied Effusions, which appear'd in every of those publick Forms, which were consider'd and fix'd: And it founded more decently (for example sake) to pray in the Churches

Churches words, and say, from *Fornication* good Lord deliver us, than to use those of an Eminent Dissenter, * Lord unlust * Prayers at us. Nor did the long continued Prayers help Men so the end of much against Distraction as those shorter ones, with Farewel Breaks and Pauses in the Liturgy, and the great and conti-Sermons. nued length of them introduc'd, by consent sitting at Prayer. Mr. U's Pray-

Neither did it tend less to Edification, to repeat the before Ser-Creed standing, than to leave it quite out of the *Directo-* mon, p. 31. ry for publick Worship. Neither was it an advantage to Christian Piety to change the gesture of Kneeling in the *Eucharist*, when the Sacred Elements were given together with Prayer, for that less reverend one of sitting: Of sitting especially with the Hat on, as the most uncomely practice of some was; the People being taught to cover † Edward's the Head †, whilst the Minister was to remain bare a-Gangrena mongst them. Nor was the Civil Pledge of the Ring in part 1. Error Marriage bettered by the invention of some Pastors, who 113. p. 25. (as is storied of them) took a Ring of * some Women- * See Edw. Converts, upon their admittance into their Church. Gan. part 2.

Neither was the Alteration of the Form of giving the p. 13. Holy Elements an amendment. For the Minister was * Directory directed to the use of these words * Take ye, Eat ye; this is for Publick the Body of Christ which is broken for you—This Cup is the Worship. New Testament in the Blood of Christ, which is shed for the p. 27. remission of the sins of many.—The words denoting Christ's

present Crucifix, and (either actually or in the future certainty of it) give countenance to the *Romish* Sacrifice of the Mass; tho' I verily believe they were not so intended.

Nor did the forbidding the Observation of Christ's Nativity and other Holy-days, add one Hair's breadth to the Piety of the Nation; but on the other hand, it took away, at least from the common People, one ready means of fixing in their Memories the most useful History of the Christian Religion.

It is easy enough, even for Men who were Dwarfs in the Politicks, in such sort to alter a Constitution as to make it more pleasing for a time to themselves during their Passion, and the Novelty of the Model in their Fancy not yet disturbed by some unforeseen Mischief or Inconveniency; but 'tis extream difficult upon the whole matter, to make a true and lasting Improvement, there being so many parts in the frame to be mutually fitted, and such variety of Cases in Humane Affairs.

I pray from my Heart for the bettering, but I dread the tinkering of Government.

The CONCLUSION.

IF then Dissenters are not like to obtain their Ends of Establishing themselves, of rooting out Popery, and Promb-

promoting pure Religion, by overthrowing the Church of England; the Inference is natural, they ought both in Prudence and Christianity, to endeavour after Union with it.

They will (it may be) say to me, Can Men be persuaded two contrary Ways? Can they both Assent and Dissent? And whilst they secretly Dissent, would you force them into a Hypocritical Compliance? I Answer thus.

First, Tho' a Man cannot at the same time wholly Assent and Dissent, yet there are means for the rectifying of a false Persuasion; and he may, upon good grounds, change his Mind.

Secondly, No Man's mind can be forced; for it is beyond the reach of Human Power.

Thirdly, Good Governors do not use Severity, to force Men to dissemble their Minds, and to make them Hypocrites, but to move them after a Trial of fair Means, to greater Consideration.

Tavern. Pers.
Trav. l. 4. c. 6.
p. 155, 156.

I am not concern'd in the Emblem of the *Persian* * *Dervish*, who, whilst they go about their Office of Teaching the Law to the People, carry a great Club in their Hands. But neither do I think that the best way to remove pernicious Error from Men, is never to give them any disturbance in it.

I have two things only to recommend, first to the consideration, and then to the practice of such as Dissent.

First, This is a time of Prosecution; and a time of Adversity is a proper time for Consideration, and Consideration is a Means to make us hold fast that which is good, and reject that which is evil. I beseech you, make such advantage of this Juncture. Sit down, and think once more of the Nature of this Church. Confer with the Guides of the National Religion; read without prejudice, the Books commended by them to you. Peruse seriously the Books which Authority hath set forth. Some who have spoken against them, have, by their own Confession, never read them. Examine and judge. Many of your Scruples have arisen from what you have heard and read; they would not have otherwise been ingendred in your Minds. Hear and Read for your Information, as well as your Entanglement.

† See *Law.*

offhearing the Secondly, Do as much as you can do. Do as much as the publick Ministers, who are most eminent for Learning, Piety, *stry, &c.* by Preaching, Writing, Experience and Fame; sometimes Mr. Nye, Mr. *Robinson, &c.* actually do. They have owned our Communion to be lawful †. They have received the Communion Kneeling, and Mr. Cor- They have bred up Children to the Ministry of this *ber's* Noncon- Church. They have joyned in the Liturgy. They have formists *Plea* been married according to the Form of it. Nay, one for Lay Com- who assisted in making the Directory, would have his munion. own Daughter (in those times) be married in the way (a) Mr. *Mrs.* of the Book of Common-Prayer (a) Do as the ancient *that in Hist. of Nonconformists did,* who would not separate, tho' they *Indep. par. 14* fear'd

fear'd to subscribe; who wrote with such Zeal against those of the Separation, that Mr. Hildersham was called, *The (b) Maul of the Brownists.*

Do more for the Peace of God's Church, than for a *(b) See Dr. Wil-*
Vote or Office, or Fear of Legal Penalty. Come as Chri-*lis's Epistle*
stians to the Sacrament, and not as Politicians. Those *Dedicatory,*
who have so done, yet break the Unity of the Church, are *before his*
said to use the Arts of *Jesuits*, and to be without all excuse, *Harm. on 1.*
by a Dissenter (-) who writes with commendable Temper. *Sam. Schismaticorum (Qui vul-*

Do constantly, what you do upon occasion. No Preach-*go Brownistæ)*
ing or Praying, which is better liked, can ballance the *malleum.*
Evil of Separation from a Church, which imposeth no
Terms of Communion which are sinful. *(c) Vox Clam.*

For Peace sake let that be more constant, in which *Sect. 6. p. 49,*
your Conscience alloweth occasional Exercise. *A Member 50, &c.*
who joyns himself to an establish'd Church, and also to any
Churches which are set up, not as legal Supplements of
it, but as Forts against it, seems to be a kind of Wooden
Leg; if I may represent so grave a matter, by so light a
Similitude. He is ty'd on, and taken off at pleasure; he
is not as by natural Ligaments and Nerves, knit to such
Ecclesiastical Bodies. If all would do constantly what
they can in Conscience do sometimes, they would create
a better Opinion of themselves, in the Governors, and
move them to all due favour, and hinder all the destructive
Breaches amongst us. For the remain of other Dissenters
would be so inconsiderable, as to abide in the Body of the
Nation, as ill Humours thrown off the extream Parts, from
which there may arise some little pain, but no mortal
anger.

Now the God of Peace grant Peace to us always, by all fit means

FINIS.

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no

WILLIAM

